THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for connecting a call to an agent that is connected to disparate telecommunications networks, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a query from one of a plurality of telecommunications networks regarding an availability of an agent for receiving a call, each telecommunications network being a disparate telecommunications network with respect to other telecommunications networks of the plurality of telecommunications networks, the agent being coupled to each disparate telecommunications network;

determining the availability of the agent;

responding to the query with the determined availability of the agent; and

connecting the call to the agent.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of updating an availability entry for the agent to indicate that the agent is unavailable for receiving another call when the call is connected to the agent and to indicate that the agent is available for receiving another call when the call connected to the agent terminates.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of responding to the query uses SS7 signaling for communicating with the telecommunications network from which the query was received.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of determining an availability of the agent includes the steps of determining the availability of each agent of a plurality of agents and selecting an agent, and

wherein the step of responding to the query includes the step of determining routing instructions for routing the call from the telecommunications network from which the query was received to the selected agent.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the routing instructions are determined based on one of a lowest cost criteria, a hierarchical criteria, an RTNR/Optimized routing criteria, a time of day, a day of a week, a call origination location, and a network congestion condition.

6. The method according to claim 4, wherein the selected agent is selected based on one of an agent skill level and a most idle agent criteria.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the disparate telecommunications network is an NCP architecture network.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the NCP architecture network is a circuit-switched telecommunications network.

9. The method according to claim 7, wherein the NCP architecture network is an ATM network.

10. The method according to claim 7, wherein at least one of the disparate telecommunications network is an Internet resources network.

11. A system comprising:

an agent receiving calls from at least two disparate telecommunications networks; and

a processor coupled to the agent and to each telecommunications network from which the agent receives calls, the processor receiving a query from a telecommunications network regarding an availability of the agent for receiving a call, determining the availability of the agent and responding to the query with the determined availability of the agent.

12. The system according to claim 11, wherein the processor includes a memory storing an availability entry for the agent, the processor updating the availability entry for the agent to indicate that the agent is unavailable for receiving another call when the call is connected to the agent and to indicate that the agent is available for receiving another call when the call connected to the agent terminates.

13. The system according to claim 12, wherein the processor communicates with each disparate telecommunications network using an SS7 signaling protocol.

14. The system according to claim 11, further comprising a plurality of agents, each agent being coupled to the at least two disparate telecommunications network for receiving calls from the telecommunications networks, and

wherein the processor is coupled to each agent, the processor receiving a query from a telecommunications network regarding an availability of an agent for receiving the call, determining the availability of each agent and responding to the query with routing instructions for routing the call from the telecommunications network from which the query was received to a selected agent.

15. The system according to claim 14, wherein the processor determines the routing instructions based on one of a lowest cost criteria, a hierarchical criteria,

an RTNR/Optimized routing criteria, a time of day, a day of a week, a call origination location, and a network congestion condition.

16. The system according to claim 15, wherein the selected agent is selected by the processor based on one of an agent skill level and a most idle agent criteria.

17. The system according to claim 11, wherein at least one telecommunications network is an NCP architecture network.

18. The system according to claim 17, wherein the NCP architecture network is a circuit-switched telecommunications network.

19. The system according to claim 17, wherein the NCP architecture network is an ATM network.

20. The system according to claim 17, wherein at least one telecommunications network is an Internet resources network.

add B3

Sub C3

add D2